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POUSSIN AND HIS WORKS.



ARCADIAN SHEPHERDS. FROM A PICTURE BY NICOLAS POUSSIN, IN THE LOUVRE.

POUSSIN AND HIS WORKS.

II.

POUSSIN was in his thirtieth year when he first visited Rome. Having attained the long-cherished object of his desires, he had yet to struggle with adverse fortune. He enjoyed but few of the advantages which the friendship of Marino seemed to promise him. That gentleman retired to Naples, his native city, where he soon after died. Before quitting Rome he had recommended Poussin to Marcel Sacchetti, who presented him to the Cardinal Barberini, nephew of Pope Urban the Seventh; but, unfortunately, this new patron set out immediately for his legations in France and Spain, without being able to assist the poor artist. Thus left without friends, without money, and, for a time, almost without hope of rising in his profession, Poussin continued to labour hard for the means of subsistence; he was forced to sell his pictures for but little more than the cost of the materials:—he sold two battle-pieces, each containing a large number of figures, for fourteen crowns; and he was paid eight francs for a figure of a prophet, while a copy of the very same picture by another painter produced double that sum.

Most men who have excelled in any pursuit have generally found the commencement of their career to be one of trial and difficulty; as if it were kindly intended to prove the sincerity of their attachment by denying success to enthusiasm merely, and granting it only to that constancy and strength of devotion proved by years of servitude. Poussin's love for his art was sufficient to support him amid such poverty and privation as would have driven a meaner man to seek, in a meāner pursuit, that recompense which these lofty aspirations denied him; but there was an energy about the character of Poussin which maintained him in his struggle with fortune; as if he were determined to wrest from her those gifts which she refused on gentle terms. In the midst of all his troubles Poussin found a treasure more costly than any that fortune could bestow, namely, a friend. Francis Quesnoy, surnamed the Fleming, a skilful sculptor, was then in Rome: he had been as unsuccessful as Poussin, and a fellow-feeling in misfortune was a bond of union between them:—they studied together; they toiled together; they suffered together; and they also shared together that true enjoyment which springs from a genuine love of the beautiful and the true in nature, science, and art. The two artists examined, and copied, and measured, with the greatest care, many of the master-pieces of antique sculpture, and studied therein the principles of beauty and proportion.

Poussin's love of study was such, that, on holidays, he withdrew from the merry-making parties of his acquaintance, and retired to the Capitol to make some sketch. As he wandered amid the ruins of ancient Rome, his imagination would restore them to their pristine grandeur,—repeople them with their ancient occupants,—constitute himself an ancient Roman;—thus would he acquire ideas and feelings which animated his compositions.

I have often admired, (said Vigneul de Marville, who knew him at a late period of his life,) I have often admired the love he had for his art. Old as he was I frequently saw him among the ruins of ancient Rome, sketching a scene which had pleased him; and I often met him with his handkerchief full of stones, moss, or flowers, which he carried home that he might copy them exactly from nature. One day I asked him how he had attained to such a degree of perfection as to have gained so high a rank among the great painters of Italy? He answered, "I have neglected nothing."

In company with Quesnoy, Poussin also applied himself with assiduity to the study of architecture, geometry, and perspective. At Paris he had commenced the study of anatomy; he continued it at Rome;

and he also frequented schools for studying from the living model.

At this period the fame of Guido was at its height. Most of the pupils, seduced by the intellectual style and easy and agreeable manner of this master, copied his works, and especially the picture of the "Martyrdom of St. Andrew," painted in fresco, in the Church of St. Gregory. But the more correct taste of Poussin sheltered him from all seduction; he was the only one who studied the "Flagellation" of the same saint, painted in the same building, on the opposite side, by Dominichino, who was regarded by Poussin as a worthy successor of the Caracci, as well for correctness of design as for vigour of expression. At this time the health of Dominichino was in a declining state, and he lived in such close retirement that he was supposed by some to be dead; but having heard that a young Frenchman was making a careful study from his picture, he caused himself to be conveyed in his chair to the church, where he conversed for some time with Poussin without making himself known. The result was honourable to both; for, from that day, Poussin passed much of his time with Dominichino; studied in his school; enjoyed his friendship, and profited by his advice, until the old man died.

Poussin displayed his good taste and courage in supporting the fame of Dominichino, which was then so overborne by the partisans of Guido, that his picture of the "Communion of St. Jerome," had been torn from its place in the church of San Girolamo della Carità, and thrown into a lumber room, where it remained forgotten, until the monks, desirous of having a new altarpiece, requested Poussin to paint one for them, and sent him Dominichino's picture as old canvass to paint it upon. He no sooner saw it, than, struck with its extraordinary merit, he conveyed it to the church for which it had been painted, and gave a public lecture upon it, in which he ventured to compare it with the "Transfiguration," and pronounced it to be one of the finest pictures in Rome. Dominichino had been accused of borrowing the composition from a sketch by the Caracci on the same subject, but Poussin showed that they had never finished their picture, and that Dominichino altered and improved it in every particular, and that so far from injuring them by appropriating their idea, he had shown what a noble use might be made of it, and from it had composed one of the finest pictures in the world. The appeal was successful, and from this time the elegant but weaker attractions of the rival school gave way, and Dominichino assumed his just rank among the painters of Italy. It is said that Poussin thus produced a sort of revolution among artists, and that many of the followers and pupils of Guido abandoned that master in order to study Dominichino; and that Poussin's share in the proceeding, honourable as it was to him, was the cause of some inconvenience if not of danger to him.

At this time the see of Rome and the court of France were at variance, and considerable acrimony existed among his Holiness's troops against all Frenchmen. These soldiers, whose duty it was to maintain the tranquillity of the city, often disturbed it by insulting Frenchmen whom they chanced to meet in the streets. One day Poussin was returning to his lodgings with his portfolio under his arm, in company with two of his countrymen, when they met at the Quattro Fontane, near Monte Cavallo, some soldiers who immediately drew their swords and ran upon Poussin and his companions. The latter ran away, leaving Poussin to deal with the assailants; he parried their blows by means of his portfolio; but did not escape so well, but that he received a blow upon his right hand between the first and middle finger, and if the sword had not luckily been turned aside, a great misfortune must have happened both to him and to painting. Poussin, however,

continued to defend himself valiantly although he was without arms, throwing stones as he retreated, until the passengers taking his part, he made good his escape to his lodgings. From this time Poussin thought it prudent to lay aside his French attire, which then differed from the Italian, and to adopt the latter; and he never again resumed the costume of his native land.

About this period Poussin was attacked with a malady which, during some days, exposed his life to danger; but in this, as in the other events of his hitherto chequered career, he was not abandoned by Providence; he was visited in his sufferings by a countryman named Jacques Dughet, who was cook to the Roman senator. This kind-hearted man caused the poor artist to be removed to his own house, and recommended him to the attentions of his wife and children, who, entering fully into the spirit of benevolence which had prompted this kind action, watched over him, nursed him, and consoled him with their friendship. Poussin felt so much grateful affection for this family, that, when he recovered, he desired to become one of its members. He sought and obtained one of Dughet's daughters in marriage, and the ceremony was performed in the year 1629, on the day of St. Luke, the patron saint of painters. The marriage-portion of his wife furnished Poussin with the means of purchasing a small house on the Trinita de' Monti, formerly the Pincian-hill, a situation admirably adapted for painters, commanding as it did the finest views of Rome. Although this was a marriage of affection, which lasted until it was dissolved by death, it was also one of prudence, for Poussin was thereby secured against want and the mental inquietudes consequent on an insufficient income, so that he could henceforth devote himself entirely to the study and exercise of his art. His wife brought him no children, but he adopted one of her brothers and taught him his art; this was Gaspar Dughet, afterwards celebrated as Gaspar Poussin, Nicholas having conferred on him his own name and his talent for landscape-painting.

On the return of the Cardinal Barberini to Rome, Poussin was recompensed for the sufferings he had endured in his absence. The cardinal gave him commissions for a number of pictures chiefly on subjects chosen from the Scriptures. Poussin also painted for him his celebrated picture of the "Death of Germanicus," and the "Taking of Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus."

He also executed a number of designs after the most beautiful monuments of antiquity for the Cavaliere del Pozzo. This gentleman had been employed by the Barberini family to superintend the excavations and discoveries they were engaged in at Palestrina. Through his means Poussin obtained permission to study in the Barberini Museum, which contained some of the finest specimens of ancient art, as well as a choice collection of pictures, many of which have since found their way to England. Gems, cameos, and statues abounded in that rich gallery, which, among other things, possessed the beautiful vase now in the British Museum, and known as the Portland Vase.

Through the means of Del Pozzo, Poussin first became acquainted with the writings of Leonardo de Vinci, and was engaged to decipher those difficult manuscripts. The publication of that great man's *Art of Painting*, is due to Poussin, who made a number of designs illustrative of the theory of the author. The kind friendship of Del Pozzo, and the patronage of Cardinal Barberini, procured for Poussin the honourable commission of painting one of the great pictures which was to be executed in mosaic in the church of St. Peter. This picture, representing "The Martyrdom of St. Erasmus," is one of the master-pieces of Poussin, and the only performance to which he has attached his name; and the motive for doing so in this instance was thus modestly expressed by him, "lest any one should igno-

rantly attribute this feeble work to the great masters who had already adorned that splendid building with their master-pieces."

About this time, also, Poussin painted for the Cavaliere del Pozzo, of Turin, "The Passage of the Red Sea," and "The Setting up of the Golden Calf in the Wilderness." The "Striking of the Rock," was a gift of friendship to Jacques Stella, his pupil, one of those who most nearly approached his manner.

Poussin was not wanting in gratitude to the Cavaliere del Pozzo, his generous protector. He painted for him a number of pictures, among which was the first and smallest series of "The Seven Sacraments;" now in the possession of the Duke of Rutland at Belvoir Castle, but one of them was unfortunately destroyed in the fire which occurred there in the year 1816.

We have now arrived at that part of the life of Poussin when he had attained happiness and tranquillity. Enjoying the esteem of all who knew him, his increasing celebrity neither prompted his ambition nor multiplied his wants; he devoted himself to the execution of a vast number of subjects, of which even a list would exceed the limits of this article.

As the fame of Poussin extended over Europe, his own country was jealous at being indebted to Italy for the developement of his talents, and wished to share in the light and lustre which the works of her exiled son cast around him. The Cardinal de Richelieu had long desired to see the arts again flourish in France, and by his advice the king had sanctioned the vast plan, (which it was reserved to a subsequent age fully to realize,) of completing the Louvre, adorning the great gallery, and restoring the Palace of Fontainebleau and other royal residences.

The exalted talents of Poussin, the propriety of his conduct, and the moderation of his character, naturally indicated him as the leader of such an enterprise; and accordingly in the year 1639, he was invited to Paris. Poussin, however, was slow to accept the invitation; he called to mind the hardships he had suffered in France; he knew how to appreciate the levity of his countrymen, and the promises of the great; and besides, he had become acclimated in Italy; he was beloved by his wife, cherished by his friends, honoured by amateurs of art, and respected by his rivals: he feared to risk his reputation and his happiness in another land. During two years he resisted the repeated invitations of Louis the Thirteenth, the requests of his powerful minister, and the enthusiasm of his countrymen. At length when all other means had failed, M. de Chanteloup, one of the royal household, was sent to Rome to exert his influence among the friends of our artist to persuade him to accept the royal invitation. This gentleman, who was a great lover of painting, no sooner saw the series of the Sacraments belonging to the Cavaliere del Pozzo, than he requested Poussin to procure their owner's permission to have them copied, leaving the choice of the artist to Poussin if he would not undertake to do it himself. Del Pozzo, however, was unwilling to trust them to another artist, and Poussin preferred painting a new series to copying his own compositions. He did not execute this work, however, till some years afterwards, when he produced a new series different in design from the former.

Poussin at length yielding to the solicitations of his friends, consented to accompany M. de Chanteloup to the French court, and towards the end of the year 1640, he set out, taking with him a younger brother of his wife's, John Dughet, as his secretary, leaving his family and affairs under the especial care of the Cavaliere del Pozzo.

Poussin's reception at the French court will be most interesting to the reader, if conveyed in his own words in a letter addressed to the Cavaliere del Pozzo, within a few days after his arrival at Paris.

Full of confidence in the good will which you have always shown me, I think it my duty to give you an account of the fortunate success of my journey, as well as of my situation, and the place I inhabit, that you, my kind protector, may know where to lay your commands on me. My health was very good during the whole journey from Rome to Fontainebleau, where I was very honourably received in the palace by a nobleman deputed for that purpose by M. de Noyers; from thence I was taken to Paris in that minister's coach, and had scarcely arrived when he came out to meet me, embraced me in a friendly manner, and showed very great pleasure at seeing me in France. At night I was conducted by his orders to the place he had destined for my apartment; it is a little palace, for so it may be called, in the midst of the garden of the Tuilleries, containing nine chambers on three stories, without reckoning the ground floor, which consists of a kitchen, a porter's lodge, a hall, and three convenient rooms for domestic purposes. There is, besides, a beautiful and spacious garden, planted with fruit trees and vegetables of all kinds, a pretty plot of flowers, three little fountains, a well, a very handsome court, and a stable. I have a beautiful view from my windows, and I can imagine that in summer this retreat must be a perfect paradise. I found the centre apartment furnished nobly, and all necessary provisions laid in, even to fire wood, and a cask of old wine. For three days my friends and I were entertained at the king's expense. The fourth day M. de Noyers presented me to the Cardinal, who took my hand, embraced me, and treated me with extraordinary condescension. A few days afterwards, I was taken to St. Germain, where M. de Noyers was to have presented me to the king; but M. de Noyers being indisposed, I was not introduced till the next day, when M. le Grand, one of the court favourites, presented me. The good and gracious prince deigned to caress me, and asked me a great many questions during the half hour he kept me with him; after which, turning round to the court, he said, 'I think we have taken in Vouet,' and then he ordered me to paint the great pictures for his chapel of Fontainebleau and St. Germain. When I went home they brought me two thousand crowns in gold, in a handsome blue velvet purse. One thousand for my salary, and one thousand for my journey, without reckoning my expenses. And, indeed, money is very necessary in this country where every thing is extremely dear.

I have now turned my thoughts upon the works I am to execute; they are pictures, cartoons for tapestry, and many other things. I shall have the honour of sending you a specimen of my first labours as a tribute of gratitude, and as soon as my packages arrive, and I am relieved from uneasiness on account of them, I hope to portion my time in such a manner as to employ a part of it in the service of your brother the Chevalier.

I recommend my little household interests to your care, since you deign to take charge of them during my absence, which shall not be long if I can help it. I beseech you, since you are born to be kind to me, to bear, with your usual generous patience, the trouble I must give you, and to content yourself in return with my entire affection. May the Lord grant you a long and happy life. As to me, with all the respect of which I am capable, I remain, &c.,

Paris, Jan. 6th, 1641. POUSSIN.

Another article will enable us to complete this memoir of Poussin. We conclude the present notice with a short account of the picture from which our frontispiece is taken.

Poussin painted two pictures on the subject of the "Arcadian Shepherds." One is in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire. In this picture the thought has been highly and justly praised. Two Arcadian shepherds and a shepherdess are looking on the inscription on a tomb in the midst of an agreeable landscape. The inscription carries the moral; it is simply, I TOO DWELT IN ARCADIA.

In the second picture, (now in the Louvre,) from which our frontispiece is taken, the subject is differently treated. Here the tomb is in the middle of the picture, instead of the side as in the other. This is preferred by the French critics, and, perhaps, justly. The idea is the same, and the persons are only different in position.

THE NATURAL HISTORY AND MANAGEMENT OF CAGE BIRDS.



IV.

THE NIGHTINGALE, (*Sylvia Euscina*.)

Beautiful Nightingale, who shall pourtray
All the varying turns of thy flowing lay!
And where is the lyre, whose chords shall reply
To the notes of thy changeful melody?
We may linger indeed, and listen to thee,
But the linked chain of thy harmony
It is not for mortal hands to unbind,
Nor the clue of thy mazy music to find.
Thy home is the wood on the echoing hill,
Or the verdant banks of the forest rill,
And soft as the south wind the branches among,
Thy plaintive lament goes floating along.

Minstrelsy of the Woods.

THE most celebrated of all birds, both in ancient and modern times, is the Nightingale. It is the *Philomela* of the ancients; that is, "the lover of darkness," from the habit of the bird to sing late in the evening and in the early morning hours, when other birds are at roost. One of the earliest notices of the nightingale is in the *Odyssey*.

As when the months are clad in flowery green,
Sad Philomel in bowery shades unseen.

Hesiod and Oppian notice the variety of its song, calling it the "various-voiced," or "various-throated" bird; Sophocles refers to its notes as affording an image of vociferous sorrow; and Virgil and Ovid attribute to them a plaintive character. Later poets describe the nightingale as lamenting and complaining, or giving way to despair.

All abandon'd to despair she sings
Her sorrows through the night.—THOMSON.

Coleridge, however, does not admit that the character of the song is melancholy. He says:

A melancholy bird! Oh! idle thought—
In nature there is nothing melancholy.
But some night-wandering man, whose heart was pierced
With the remembrance of some grievous wrong,
Or slow distemper, or neglected love;
(And so, poor wretch! fill'd all things with himself,
And made all gentle sounds send back the tale
Of his own sorrow;) he, and such as he,
First named these notes a melancholy strain,
And many a poet echoes the conceit.

We have learnt

A different lore: we may not thus profane
Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance! 'Tis the *merry* nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates,
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music!

The nightingale inhabits Europe from Italy and Spain in the south to Sweden in the north. It is also found in Siberia, and has been seen in some parts of Asia and Africa. It leaves the temperate countries of Europe as winter approaches, and retires into warmer regions. Sonnini has observed the arrival of nightingales in Lower Egypt during the autumn, has seen them during winter on the fresh and smiling plains of the Delta, and has also witnessed their passage in the islands of the

Archipelago. In some parts of Asia Minor the nightingale is common, and never quits the woods in which it has taken up its abode. These birds are found in considerable numbers on the coast of Barbary, where they are always more numerous at the time when they have quite disappeared from the countries of the north. So powerful is the instinct of migration in the nightingale that those which are kept in activity usually exhibit much agitation, especially during the night, at the periods when the species migrate. The departure and return of these birds is due not only to the change in the season, but to the abundance or scarcity of their appropriate food.

When passing through countries which are foreign to them on their route to their winter or summer home, nightingales never pour forth their enchanting melody: it is only during the nesting season, and when they are rearing their young, that those strains are heard which give so much delight. The song of these birds is said to be richer and more varied in some countries than in others. Thus the nightingales of Persia, Karamania, and Greece, are said to sing better than those of Italy; the Italian birds again are valued above those of France, and the French above the English. Whether this be anything more than a fanciful theory, we have no good means of judging; but the following testimony seems to contradict the idea that *situation* has much influence on the song of this bird. "In 1802," says Mr. Symes, "being at Geneva, at the residence of a friend, about three miles from the town, in a quiet sequestered spot, surrounded by gardens and forests, and within hearing of the murmur of the Rhone, there, on a beautiful still evening, the air soft and balmy, the windows of the house open, and the twilight chequered by trees, there we heard two nightingales sing indeed most delightfully,—but not more so than one we heard down a stair, in a dark cellar, in the High Street, in Edinburgh!—such a place as that described in *The Antiquary*; no window, and no light admitted, but what came from the open door, and the atmosphere charged with the fumes of tobacco and spirits; it was a place where carriers lodged, or put up,—and the heads of the porters and chairmen, carrying luggage, nearly came in contact with the cage, which was hung at the foot of the staircase; yet even here did this bird sing in as mellow, as sweet, and as sprightly a manner as did those at Geneva."

The nightingale is naturally timid and solitary, and arrives and departs alone. It appears in England from the middle of April to the beginning of May, according to the season. At first it remains in hedges and thickets on the borders of cultivated ground, where an abundant supply of food can be procured; but as soon as the larger trees are covered with foliage it retires into the woods, and hides in the thickest recesses. The neighbourhood of some purling stream is generally chosen by the bird, and the male usually has two or three favourite trees near the nest, on one or the other of which he constantly sings during the period of incubation, and never allows one of his own species to approach the spot. The nest is usually commenced about the beginning of May, and is formed with coarse weeds and dried oak-leaves on the outside, and with horse-hair, little roots, and cow-hair on the inside. It is placed near the ground in brush-wood at the foot of a hedge, or on the low branches of some thick shrub, and is so slightly constructed that an attempt to displace it will often cause it to crumble to pieces. Four or five eggs of a greenish brown colour are deposited in it, and the male supplies food to the female while she is sitting. The little ones have the body covered with feathers in a fortnight from the time they are hatched, and quit the nest before they are able to fly, following their parents as well as they can by jumping from branch to branch. When they are fully fledged the mother bird leaves them to the care of her mate, and begins to construct a new nest for her second brood.

The full-grown nightingale is a bird of elegant proportions, but of unattractive plumage. It is about five inches long, two and a half of which belong to the tail.

The bill is more than half an inch long, slender, of a dull brown colour, with a yellowish tinge at the base of the lower mandible. The upper parts of the body are yellowish brown, the wings and tail dusky, with a reddish tinge at the margin of the feathers. The sides of the neck and flanks are pale ashen grey, passing into white on the throat and the middle of the belly. None of the colours are by any means decided, and there is nothing striking in the appearance of the bird. The female differs little from the male, but the head is rounder, the eyes are rather smaller, and the throat is not so white. Bechstein notices a striking resemblance between the female redstart and the nightingale, but says of the latter, "His step and attitude are prouder, and his actions more deliberate. When he walks it is by measured regular hops. After a certain number he stops, looks at himself, shakes his wings, raises his tail gracefully, spreads it a little, stoops his head several times, raises his tail several times, and proceeds. If any object attracts his attention, he bends his head towards it, and generally looks at it with only one eye. It is true that he jumps hastily upon the insects which constitute his food; but he does not seize them as eagerly as other birds; on the contrary, he stops short, and seems to deliberate whether it is prudent to eat them or not. Generally he has a serious circumspect air, but his foresight is not proportioned to it, for he falls readily into all the snares which are laid for him. If he once escapes, however, he is not so easily caught again, and becomes as cunning as any other birds."

The latter end of April is the usual period of the commencement of the nightingale's song. It ceases or suffers interruption when the young are hatched, but should the nest be destroyed, or other cause prolong the period of incubation, the male resumes his strains, and in places where nightingales abound several may generally be heard in full song during the season.

Far and near

In wood and thicket over the wide grove
They answer and provoke each other's songs,
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical, and swift jug, jug,
And one low piping sound, more sweet than all,
Stirring the air with such an harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might almost
Forget it was not day.

Some naturalists affirm that there is a part of the night in which nightingales seldom sing; that they are not, according to their name, "lovers of darkness," but hail the moonlight or the dawn of day. Others affirm, that they are silent only on dark windy nights, but at other times, having once commenced their song, they continue it without intermission the whole night. "This I know," (says Neville Wood,) "from actual observation, having more than once remained out of doors nearly the whole night, purposely to discover whether the bird or the naturalist would first be wearied. If on a dark and windy night it does not sing, it may generally be roused by imitating its strains; but as this is done on a *favourable* night, it will commence instantly; but on a cold and chilly night it is sometimes very difficult to rouse, though I have seldom been so unfortunate as to fail entirely. The shutting of an adjoining gate, the striking of a church clock, the passing of a cart or coach, if near a road, or even the hearing passengers walking along the hard turnpike, will frequently cause it to commence singing! the very incidents which one might have supposed would disturb so shy a bird."

The nightingale is said to attach himself to the place which gave him birth, and to return to it every year until it has lost its charm or advantage, by the cutting down of trees, &c. If the bird dies or is caught, the convenience of his retreat causes it to be soon occupied by one of his fellows, and the ear, well accustomed to the notes of the former occupant, will immediately detect a difference in the song of the new comer.

Many attempts have been made to give a written description of the notes which compose the nightingale's song; of these, Bechstein's is the most ingenious, though ludicrous in appearance. We shall here content ourselves with a general notice of the bird's powers found in Griffith's CUVIER. "The nightingale unites

the talents of all the singing birds, and succeeds in every style; sixteen different burdens may be reckoned in its song, well determined by the first and last notes. It can sustain the song uninterrupted during twenty seconds, and the sphere which its voice can fill is at least a mile in diameter. Song is so peculiarly the attribute of this species, that even the female possesses it, less strong and varied, it is true, than that of the male, but as to the rest entirely resembling it; even in its dreaming sleep, the nightingale warbles. What peculiarly constitutes the charm of this bird is, that it never repeats itself, like other birds; it creates at each burden, or passage, and even if it ever resumes the same, it is always with new accents and added embellishments. In calm weather, in the fine nights of spring, when its voice is heard alone, undisturbed by any other sound, nothing can be more ravishing and delightful: then it develops, in their utmost plenitude, all the resources of its incomparable organ; but from the setting in of the summer solstice, it grows more sparing of its song, it is seldom heard, and when it is, there is neither animation nor constancy in its tones. In a few days at this time, the song altogether ceases, and we hear nothing but hoarse cries and a croaking sound, in which we would in vain endeavour to recognise the melodious *Philomela*."

Great patience, attention, and care, are necessary in the management of a nightingale as a cage bird; yet if the temper and habits of the captive are consulted, he becomes attached to his owner, and has been known to die of regret at a change of masters. If taken at his full growth, he becomes, under proper precautions, reconciled to confinement, and begins to sing in about a week afterwards. Nightingales may either be allowed to fly about a room, or confined in a cage; the latter plan most promotes their singing. The cage must never be less than a foot and a half in length, by about one in width, and one or more in height. The top should be lined with some soft material, that the bird, when first caught, may not injure his head by flying against it. Bechstein gives the following as the best form and proportions for a nightingale's cage:—Length, one foot and a half; breadth, eighth inches; height, fifteen inches in the middle, thirteen at the sides. The sides to be made of osiers about a quarter of an inch thick; the bottom of the same material, but covered by a drawer an inch and a quarter deep. The feeding trough is introduced at the side, with edges high enough to prevent the bird from spilling much of his food. In the middle of the front of the cage, and extending from top to bottom, is a cylindrical projection in the form of a belfry, in which is suspended a large drinking glass. This projection is made of osiers, like the rest of the cage. The middle and lower sticks are covered with green cloth, firmly sewed on, that the feet of the nightingale may be preserved from injury. Green is also the best colour to use for painting the osiers and lining the roof of the cage. But the paint must be perfectly dry, and the cage free from the smell of it, before the bird is put into it.

This bird dislikes change of situation during its captivity, and has been observed to cease singing, and to remain obstinately silent, on the removal of its cage from the accustomed spot. It is better, therefore, either to accustom it when it is moulting to continual changes, so as to break through this habit, or keep the cage in one situation during the whole season. The choice of this situation is not a matter of indifference, and the prisoner's taste must be consulted in the matter. Some birds prefer a light and cheerful situation, others appear more lively in a shaded retired corner. On first placing one of these birds in a cage, it is necessary to cover two or three sides of it from the light, as the bird is often so much alarmed when exposed on all sides, that it soon ends its life by dashing against the bars.

The food of the nightingale in a state of nature consists of insects, whether in the caterpillar or the perfect state: towards the end of summer it also devours elderberries and currants. The bird is naturally voracious, and when in captivity it will accommodate itself to

almost any kind of food, provided it be mixed with meat; but it is necessary to be very careful in its diet, in order to preserve health. When the birds are first caught, meal worms and fresh ants' eggs are the first things which should be offered to them: if it is not possible to procure these, a mixture of hard egg, ox-heart minced, and white bread, is given, but this artificial food is very injurious, and often kills the birds. Subsequently, however, this and other mixtures may be given occasionally, in turn with the natural food. Bechstein's directions for keeping up a supply of meal worms, are as follows:

The means of always having a plentiful supply of meat worms is to fill a large earthenware or brown stone jar with wheat bran, barley, or oatmeal, and put into it some pieces of sugar paper or old shoe leather. Into each of these jars, of about two quarts in size, half a pint of meal worms is thrown, (these may be bought at any baker's or miller's,) and by leaving them quiet for three months, covered with a bit of woollen cloth, soaked in beer, or merely in water, they will change into beetles (*Tenebris molitor*, LINN.) These insects soon propagate by eggs, and increase the number of maggots so much that one such jar will maintain a nightingale.

For providing ants' eggs, ("improperly so called, since they are the pupæ in their cocoons,") he gives the following hint:—

For getting them out of the ant hill, a fine sunny day in summer is chosen, and provided with a shovel, we begin by gently uncovering a nest of the large wood ants (*Formica rufa*, LINN.), till we arrive at the eggs; these are then taken away and placed in the sun, in the middle of a cloth whose corners are turned up over little branches well covered with leaves. The ants, in order to protect the eggs from the heat of the sun, quickly remove them under the shelter which is prepared for them. In this manner they are easily obtained freed from dirt, and from the ants also.

Ants' eggs form the best summer food for these birds, and two or three meal worms prove a sufficient addition. A stock of dried ants' eggs may be kept, and mixed with roasted ox-heart and raw carrot, both finely grated. A paste that will keep for years is often made for nightingales, of the following ingredients:—Two pounds of rolled beef, a pound of grey peas, a pound of sweet almonds, an ounce and a half of saffron, and twelve fresh eggs. The meat is minutely hashed, the peas and almonds are pounded as finely as possible, and the whole mixed with the eggs, and an infusion of the saffron. Round cakes are then formed, and baked in a cool oven to the consistence of biscuits. Another paste is like the former, with the addition of half a pound of poppy seeds, the same of roasted millet, two ounces of flour, a pound of white honey, and two or three ounces of fresh butter. The seeds are pounded and sifted, and the whole reduced to a perfect paste. Bechstein, however, is opposed to these preparations, and says that birds fed with them often fall into a decline and die.

Nightingales suffer much during their moultings, and require at that time a more succulent diet, and sometimes a spider, which acts as a purgative. They have a habit of bathing immediately after they have sung, and should therefore be daily provided with fresh water. Their other ailments are such as are common to the birds described in our preceding articles. Their feet are very apt to become clogged and injured, unless occasionally moistened in warm water, and freed from dirt and scales.

The love of liberty is so strong in this bird, that it is far from our wish to recommend or encourage the keeping of it in confinement. The delicious strains poured forth from many a grove and copse at this season of the year, may indeed afford the purest delight; but where the habits of the bird are so entirely opposed to domestication, and where the slightest inattention, as to its peculiar food, may cause it a miserable and untimely death, there is every reason to be contented with the free and happy song of the bird at liberty, and to refrain from subjecting to imprisonment the most charming and poetical songster of the British Isles.

PUBLIC SPECTACLES AND GAMES
AMONG THE ROMANS.

I.

PUBLIC games had in their origin a useful and honourable object. The youth exercised themselves in the combats, and thus prepared themselves to defend their country in danger. From all parts of the civilized world, the most illustrious heroes went to Greece to dispute for the prize of horse and foot-racing, of wrestling, of boxing, of archery, and many other pursuits. The great poets and artists employed their genius to celebrate the glory of the conquerors; and Pindar, in his sublime chants, has made posterity acquainted with their deeds.

Rome, of Greek origin, and surrounded with a Greek population, must soon have adopted the customs of her neighbours. Gymnastic exercises agreed with a war-like nation better than any other spectacle. As long as they conduced to preserve the austerity of republican manners, those glorious combats, in which the youth rivalled each other in strength and skill, were worthy of a people entirely given up to the love of their country; but when this people had conquered the world, and accumulated in their capital the riches of the three continents, these exercises degenerated into bloody fights, whether of human beings or of beasts, in which morality and all the better feelings of our nature were most atrociously outraged.

Our subject naturally divides itself into two portions, which may be treated of in order;—1st, The games of the Circus; and 2nd, The shows of the Gladiators.

1. THE GAMES OF THE CIRCUS.

These games were supposed to have been originally dedicated to Mars, and to have been celebrated in the field of Mars, and in the month of March: but we have to observe that, among the ancient Romans, GAMES constituted a part of religious worship. They were of different sorts at different periods of the republic. They were at first consecrated to some deity. Oftentimes, they were vowed by generals in war, in the event of their success; and they took place also upon extraordinary occasions; so that the stated regularity of their recurrence was much diminished.

The CIRCUS—the grand scene of the races, both horse and foot, and of other games—was first built, we are told, by Tarquinus Priscus, the fifth king of Rome, about 600 B.C. It was afterwards, at different times, magnificently adorned. Its site was adjoining to Rome, and it was of an oval or *circular* form, whence came its name. It was about $3\frac{1}{2}$ furlongs in length, and one furlong broad. It had rows of seats all round, rising one above another, where separate places were assigned to the different ranks of people. This building is supposed to have been capable of containing a quarter of a million of people.

At each extremity of the Circus rose two columns, surmounted by images of eggs in marble, dedicated to the tutelar deities of the games, Castor and Pollux, who were said to have sprung from the eggs of the swan Leda. This was the boundary, round which the chariots should turn. In the middle of the Circus, for about the whole length of it, there was a brick wall, about 12 feet broad and 4 feet high. In the middle part of this wall was erected, in the time of Augustus Cæsar, an obelisk 132 feet high, which had been brought from Egypt; and at one extremity of this barrier, a smaller one. The oval figures at the top of the columns before-mentioned, were raised, or perhaps taken down, in order to denote how many rounds the charioteers had completed, one for each round. Above these figures appeared that of a dolphin, in honour of Neptune; that being the swiftest of marine animals. The egg-columns at one end of the Circus, therefore,

served as a starting-post, and those at the other end as a turning-post.

The high-priests, the body of the senate, the vestals, and at a later period, the emperors, assisted and presided at these fêtes. In the time of the republic, a place of honour was reserved for those citizens who had rendered glorious services to their country. They wore a crown of gold and a triumphal dress. All those who were to play some part at the games assembled in the Capitol, traversed the Forum, and thus came into the Circus. The Roman knights opened the march; then came the wrestlers, divided into three bodies; next the grown-up men, the young people, and the children. Then came flute and harp-players; then dancers, each clad in a purple tunic, fastened with a brazen belt, from which hung a sword; they were also armed with a short lance. They were preceded by a chief, who regulated the steps and the dancing. Next came bodies of armed men; after whom advanced those who were dressed like satyrs, in hairy skins, and mantles formed of flowers. Their heads were ornamented with horns; and they exhibited curious grimaces, to make the spectators laugh. Then came men bearing the gold and silver vessels consecrated to the gods. At last, all this pomp was closed by the images of the gods carried by slaves.

The magistrate who presided at the spectacle was drawn in a car. He was clad in a robe dyed with purple: he held a sceptre of ivory surmounted by an eagle. Behind him was a slave, who held above his head a crown of gold, and he advanced in this equipage up to the first barriers. Then all the officers and combatants took their places, and the signal for the commencement of the races was given by the prefect of the games, or in later times by the emperor, who threw a napkin into the arena. The chariots having been arranged by lot, and the signal for starting being given, the gates near the starting-place were opened; whence flew out the chariots which were to dispute the prize. They were obliged to go seven times round the Circus. The grand art was to turn round the pillars at the farther extremity without touching them, and without losing any advantage over their rivals.

The racers were divided into four parties distinguished by their wearing dresses of four different colours, symbolical of the four seasons: red for summer, white for winter, green for spring, blue for autumn. But, afterwards, there were but two distinguishing colours, the blue and green. Each spectator took the part of one of these two divisions, wore its colour, and betted largely upon its success. Rome, Constantinople, and all the great cities of the empire, were thus rent into two factions, who often engaged in bloody combats. The spectators of the games favoured one or the other colour, as humour or caprice inclined them. It was not the swiftness of the horses, or the art of the drivers, which so much attracted them; but it was their dress. In the reign of Justinian no less than 30,000 men are said to have lost their lives at Constantinople, in a tumult raised by contentions among the partisans of the different colours.

We are told that the Emperor Domitian added two colours, the gold and the purple. The number of chariots which ran, depended upon the number of colours. The emperors adopted almost always the green colour; and Nero, clad in this livery, disputed for the prize. Caligula wore this colour. He had such an inordinate passion for racing, that he dined in the stable with his horses. For his favourite horse he built a stable of marble, and constructed a manger of ivory. He sent ceremoniously to invite him to dinner, and gave him gilded oats. He presented him with a golden cup of wine, after having tasted it himself; and at last he made him a consul! The horses were trained with so much art, that the skill of the charioteer was almost superfluous. Pliny relates that a chariot whose

guide had been thrown out, continued its course and gained the prize.

The victor being proclaimed by the voice of a herald, was crowned, and received a prize in money of considerable value. Palms were anciently given to the conquerors in the games, after the manner of the Greeks; and those who had received crowns for their bravery in war, first wore them at the games. The palm-tree was chosen for this purpose, because it rises against a weight placed on it. Hence it was put for any token or prize of victory, or for Victory itself. Sometimes, the palm-crowns were adorned with ribbons hanging down from them.

After the chariot-races, four foot-races, one from each party, rushed forward into the Circus. They ran from east to west; and they also went seven times the round of the Circus: sometimes they were stripped of all loose coverings; at other times they ran completely armed. Often the same competitors who had disputed for the prize in a chariot, ran on the ground, and disputed for the prize of foot-racing. They took the names of the winds, whose rapidity they imitated: *Notus*, the South-wind; *Boreas*, the North-wind, &c.

Foot-racing, together with the exercises of leaping, boxing, wrestling, and throwing the quoit, went under the general name of *QUINQUERTIUM*, or the five kinds of contest.

The boxers exhibited in their turn a new spectacle. Their arms and hands were surrounded with thongs of bull's skin, to which were fastened balls of lead, to make the blows fall with greater weight. These combats were almost always bloody. The wrestlers were always anointed with a glutinous ointment to prevent firm hold, and the prize belonged to him who threw down his adversary.

The actors in the Quinquertium were previously trained in a place of exercise called the *GYMNASIUM*. Their pursuits constituted "gymnastic exercises," that is, exercises performed with no loose covering on the body, lest the limbs should be in any wise impeded. In the training of the combatants, they were restricted to a particular diet.

There was also a mock fight, called *Ludus Trojæ*, performed by young noblemen. The origin of this was referred back to the Trojans, the original ancestors of the Romans. This was usually celebrated at stated times by the emperors; it having been revived by Julius Caesar.

Another sort of sport celebrated in the Circus, was the *Venatio*, or hunting. Wild beasts were set to fight with one another, or with men, who were forced to it by way of punishment, as was the case with the primitive Christians. Some, however, fought voluntarily, either from a natural ferocity of disposition, or induced by hire. An incredible number of animals was brought from all quarters, for the entertainment of the people, at an immense expense. Pompey is said to have exhibited, upon one occasion, when he wished to please the people, five hundred lions and eighteen elephants, which were all dispatched in five days.

In the time of the Emperor Probus, about 280 A.D., the soldiers tore up whole trees, and transplanted them into the Circus, which was thus changed into a vast forest. Here they let loose a thousand ostriches, a thousand wild boars, ibexes, and giraffes, and permitted the populace to rush in upon their prey. The deserts of Asia and Africa were thus searched for objects new and monstrous, to gratify the curiosity and the sanguinary lust of the commonalty of Rome.

The traces of this pastime still exist among us in the shape of bull-baiting, badger-hunting, cock-fighting, &c.: but we trust that, by the growth of Christian feeling, and a sense of moral rectitude influencing public opinion, all these vestiges of barbarous and ruder days are fast verging to utter extinction.

There were also represented horse and foot-battles, encampments, and sieges. The contests were oftentimes waged on elephants loaded with towers, which were filled with combatants. The theatre was also metamorphosed into an immense sea, furnished with monsters, whereon two fleets filled with combatants, who were taken from criminals condemned to die, engaged in a real battle. The signal was given by a silver Triton, who came out of the waves, and sounded the charge. Heliogabalus carried his extravagance so far, as to fill the Circus with wine. Two fleets fought upon this novel kind of sea. There was exhibited also in the amphitheatre, the representation of the fable of Orpheus. A forest stocked with a vast number of birds and wild beasts, and drawn along by invisible machinery, advanced to the sound of musical instruments. Unfortunately a plank broke, and the false Orpheus fell into the midst of the beasts, and was devoured by a bear. They would train eagles to carry children in the air, in order thus to represent the taking up of Ganymede by Jupiter.

The sea-fights were not confined to the Circus. Augustus Caesar dug a lake near the Tiber for that purpose, and Domitian built a naval theatre.

In another article will be noticed the sad and detestable amusement afforded to the Roman people by the combats of the Gladiators.

FLOWERS.

FAIR flowers! a lovely sisterhood,
Whose forms in summer hours
Bloom beautiful as rainbow hues,
Nurst by bright suns, and gentle dews,
And sweet refreshing showers,
O'er ye the bee on busy wing,
Wheels many an airy flight;
Culls gladsomely from rosy cells,
And fits away to distant dells,
With hummings of delight.
Ye brightest bloom when all is fair,
When whispering zephyrs play;
When freshest green hangs o'er the bower,
And woods and streams around us pour
A tide of melody.
I linger o'er your fading blooms,
Where varied sweetness hung,
'Neath Autumn skies,—where nature fades,
And when in solitary glades,
Your humbler beauties sprung.
Emblems of man's mortality!
(By Highest Wisdom deemed,)
When fairest things of earth are gone,
Shall Amaranthine flowers adorn
The brows of Heaven's Redeemed!—M. M.

THE virtue of prosperity is temperance; fortitude that of adversity.

Who that has trod the long echoing aisles of some Gothic minster, and listened to the swell of the organ notes, while the stained light, through which the sunshine of centuries had poured upon fluted pillar and fretted roof, fell on the well-worn pavement at his feet, but has *felt*, more truly than any words could tell, that grandeur and beauty are eternal truths, are a few faint notes of that voice of God which whispers in his own soul? And who that has witnessed a public festival, a coronation, or a universal rejoicing, but has felt his heart glad with loyalty towards the mere human object of our joy, and has owned in himself that earthly shows of dignity and honour, though they be but shadows, are mighty ones, and since they actually stir up the burning thoughts they are meant to awaken, are neither a vain nor unpermitted language; but are divinely intended to form a part of our human state on earth, and are types of feelings which will not perish here?—*Truth without Prejudice.*